TOWN
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OUNTRY
HURCH

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No. 47
November, 1948

The Minister As Evangelist

MARK RICH

The first and major task in town and country work is to win people to right relationship with God. The minister is an evangelist. No matter what his specific interests are, leading people to God is an all-embracing purpose. This purpose is determined by the fact that life is complete only when it is rooted in God. Man only comes to himself, to full stature, and to salvation through Christ in God.

Cardinal Points

The work of an evangelist is not simple; it is not accomplished without the application of one's best thought, concern and energy. Several cardinal points are to be remembered in planning a program of evangelism:

The minister will keep clear the meaning of evangelism. Evangelism is not a particular method. It is a function, a process, a purpose. One of the tragedies of church work in our times has been the identification of the fact of evangelism with a method of evangelism or of enlistment. Evangelism is not holding meetings; it is the effort to win people to God.

Any effective evangelistic effort must be systematically carried out. It does not succeed as a sporadic, hit and miss effort. A normal procedure in evangelism includes a complete study of the parish constituency, an analysis of the unreached, a plan of evangelism based upon the facts and carrying the plans to completion. Long-term evangelism is quite as important, in fact, more so, than short-term.

Evangelism is a central motive in the whole church program. There are times of enlistment or ingathering, but the entire purpose and aim of the church is to lead people to God and keep them in God. The service and outreach program cannot be disassociated from the evangelistic purpose and effort.

Evangelism becomes effective in the measure that the entire church is engaged in it. No one person alone, though he be the pastor, can make the church an evangelistic force.

An effective leader in evangelism familiarizes himself with the various forms of enlistment and evangelism. It is a truism that there are many avenues to God and that people are not all won in the same way. Some are won by direct appeal; others only through a long-time process. We shall consider briefly the several types of evangelism.

Mass or Public Evangelism

Mass evangelism is the traditional method in rural churches. The pioneer church thrived through mass evangelism. It has been not only a mighty force for recruiting membership, but also a social and cultural force. It still is an effective means of enlistment in some places, but in others it has lost much of its power.

From recent experience it is clear that mass evangelism is not effective unless non-Christians attend the meetings. A negative reaction sets in where evangelists make long appeals for first decisions before a congregation in which all or nearly all are professed Christians. The process is too much like that of a fisherman casting in a swimming pool where there are no fish.

Mass meetings can not succeed without advance preparation. Individual and group work is basic to mass approach. The public response is usually an evidence of a decision made in advance. Mass evangelism has been so grossly commercialized that great care must be exercised in the selection of an evangelist. The pastor can often be his best evangelist or he can call upon a pastor of known reliability. Mass meetings can serve an excellent purpose when used as a means of building up the spiritual life of professed Christians.

Personal Evangelism

Personal evangelism has its best precedent in the New Testament. It is the highest form of evangelism. It is natural to the rural community

where the pastor can know all the people intimately and personally. Among the forms of personal evangelism are pastoral calling and enlistment, personal enlistment by Sunday school teachers and others, and organized home visitation.

Some of the most effective evangelistic results of our times are realized through this form of evangelism. Because of the centrality of the individual in rural life, it is a method specifically adapted to the country church.

Family Evangelism

The family is the most vital evangelistic force in the world. A father and a mother concerned for the spiritual lives of children can do more than any others to win them to God. A minister's primary concern will be to encourage families to put God centrally in their living. One family illustrates the spirit of many. In this family of seven children, there was rejoicing as each child made a profession of Christ and united with the church.

When young people came to marriageable age, a first concern of the family was, "Is the young man (or woman) to be married a genuine Christian?" If not, the whole family was concerned that the new in-law become an avowed follower of Christ. As each in-law and grandchild came into the fold of the church there was rejoicing.

Such a family is an evangelistic force with almost irresistible strength. The pastor can do nothing more worth while than to encourage families in the cultivation of a wholesome, sound, well-balanced and enthusiastic Christian faith.

Geographic Evangelism

Geographic evangelism refers to the interest which leads a church to define geographically its area of service, and take upon itself separately or with other churches the goal of evangelizing every person in the area.

This approach has been badly neglected in rural areas where it is most easily practiced and where it brings the largest fruitage. It grows out of the parish concept rather than the constituency concept of church responsibility.

A pastor will receive untold stimulus from a study of recent discussions of the rural community, and the techniques for delimiting it. The delineation is not done as a sociological warming-up exercise, but as an evangelistic procedure. A church's area of responsibility, in terms of area to be served, ought to be as clearly outlined as village or township boundaries.

Naturally, there will be some who come into the church from beyond that line, and some from within the boundaries who go out to other churches. Yet, setting geographic bounds with which the church has an eager concern for every person is an excellent evangelistic effort which demonstrates that the church believes in the worth of every person.

Service and Program Evangelism

Significant evangelistic results can be achieved through service and program. The pastor so concerned for the health of the community that he takes the lead in organizing a Blue Cross unit may thereby be pointing people to the Great Physician. The Lord's Acre Plan, a method of stewardship, has demonstrated conclusively that it is an evangelistic force.

A group of young people conducting meetings on vital themes, expressing themselves through community service, and expressing a contagious fellowship, make a tremendous appeal to the non-Christians. So it can be with any part of the church's program. In fact, a church which has little or no program for the community can hardly be a force for bringing people to God, no matter how it may make the evangelistic appeal at particular times. Christian activity does have an evangelistic power.

The Economic Approach

Currently there is a rising tide of interest in the settling of people on land as a means of evangelism. This policy is already well developed by certain groups, notably the Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Church of the Brethren and others. These bodies encourage young people and others to settle on farms and homes adjacent to those already owned by members of their faith. Perhaps it has been as much a cultural trait among the people as a church policy.

In contrast, such denominations as the Baptist, Presbyterian and other evangelical bodies have had little or no concern for the settlement of their people. As a result of these policies, the Roman Catholics and other communities have tended to integrate and grow while those not concerned with the relationship to the land have experienced more disintegration and decline.

The establishment of families on land is a worthy evangelistic measure. It is obvious that if this program becomes a lively real estate business the church will be worse off in the end than at the beginning. But if it is established on a sound spiritual basis it will succeed marvelously. There are several cornerstones which should be considered:

What is land? Land is considered as any productive property: soil, a home, coal miners, forest, a factory or a store. Getting families established on land refers to getting them into right long-term relationship to property.

The right relationship of man to land is a spiritual relationship. This relationship is set forth admirably in "Man's Relation To the Land," a statement of principles which underlie national, state and individual actions, and signed by Protestants, Catholics and Jews. "The Holy Earth," by L. H. Bailey, and other writings express a similar concept of man's relation to land.

A belief that a family in right relationship to property more easily grows into full Christian stature.

A practical plan for getting people settled on property. Various methods have been used. The Brethren churches have often done it quite informally, perhaps unconsciously. Two widely publicized projects, those of Rev. Eugene Smathers at Big Lick, Tennessee, and Rev. Calvin T. Schnucker at Titonka, Iowa,

e far more systematically carried

uch a plan must take into con-
ration many things, not the least
which is the economic cycle.
ple buying farms or property at
price peak may never be able to
for them. Those buying in the
igh of the economic cycle may
out in a few years. Long-term
antry may be as desirable as
nership.

Any program of land settlement is
y a phase of a much larger pro-
m of Christian development. The
mer on the land and the merchant
his own store, or the workman in
factory in which he owns an in-
est, are in need of the constant
pact of Christian teachings.

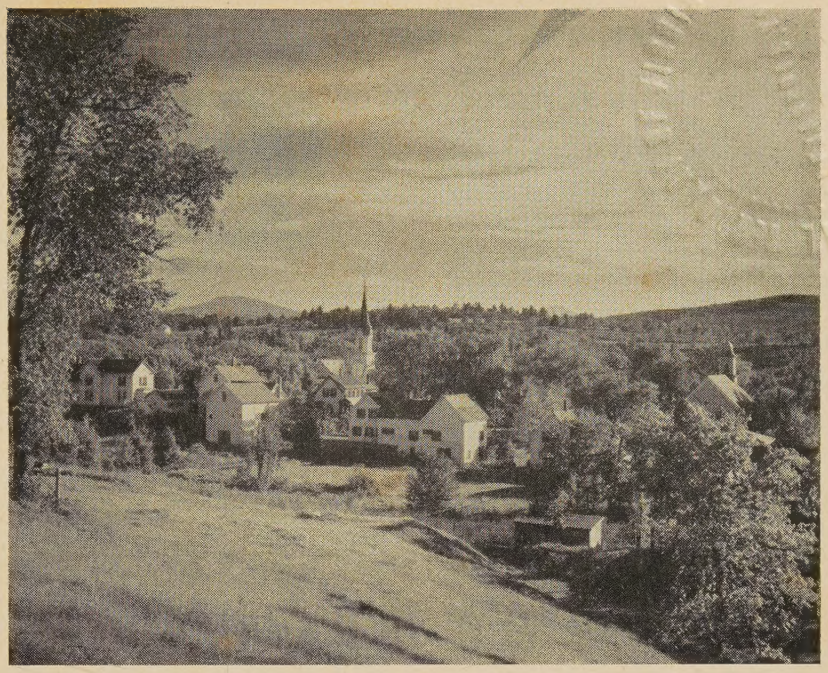
Any program of settlement should
broadly tolerant in that it does
build a community on narrowly
tarian lines. A denominational
urch embarking on such a pro-
m ought to encourage the settle-
nt of families that will take re-
nsibility in church and commu-
y.

The aim of such a program should
the full growth of the family and
the individual, which process can
t take place when it has a long
m spiritual relationship to the
d. Much more exploration and
dy in this field is needed.

The minister in town and country,
leading people to fulness of life in
rist, will use no one method ex-
sively. Times and seasons will de-
mine the method to be used. A
ored rural church in Virginia
ims that all colored adults except-
two in one-half of the county
church members. This church has
own because it has persistently
d many methods of evangelism,
t one only. The purpose of win-
ng men to God is so commanding
t no minister or church can stop
its pursuit until it has exhausted
the means.

Be not angry that you cannot
ke others as you wish them to be,
ce you cannot make yourself as
u wish to be.

—Thomas à Kempis



Whitefield Village, N. H.

A. Devaney, Inc., N. Y.

Thanksgiving Meditation

CARLTON W. SAYWELL

• *(The following Thanksgiving message was given over WOI, Ames, Iowa, in 1947, during a week of Harvest Festival Matins.)*

In November, our hearts turn to God in Thanksgiving as we remember the thanksgiving and praise of our Pilgrim forefathers as they poured out their hearts to God at their first harvest festival. They had gathered in their harvest, meager though it was. There had been suffering, pain, hunger and dire need. Now, they were making ready to face another bleak New England winter, still putting their faith and trust in God. Can you see them there in their newly established community, their hearts and faces lifted to God in appreciation for the harvest that had been reaped so recently from God's holy earth.

Creator of All Things

As we enter this week preceding Harvest Home Sunday and as we look forward to Thanksgiving Day, it is my desire to challenge every listener to turn to our living God in thanksgiving and praise for the blessings that have been ours in this fair land of freedom that we love. Will you join with me in recognizing God's ownership of all things, that God created all things?

In Genesis 1:31, the Scriptures say: "And God saw everything that He had made and behold, it was very good." The Psalmist says in the 24th Psalm: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

L. H. Bailey says in his little book the "Holy Earth"—"If God created the earth so is the earth hallowed; and if it is hallowed, so must we deal with it devotedly and with care that we do not despoil it, and mindful of our relations to all beings that live on it. We are to consider it religiously: Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Life the Gift of God

Hold in your hand a kernel of corn. Pick up a tiny wiggling suck-

ling pig. Man has worked wonders with the brain that God has given him in hybridizing the corn and building up and developing the strain and vitality of that little pig. Cut through the living germ of the seed of corn, remove the heart of the little pig and both are dead for all time. It is God that has created and given life. Man himself must recognize that his life is the gift of God. Again, we read in Genesis 2:7—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

God is our Creator and Owner. He holds us in the hollow of his hand. It is our joy, privilege and duty to pour out our very beings in praise and honor and thanksgiving to Him.

But sometimes we forget God. We are prone to say about our farms and our homes and business and our personal possessions, "This is all mine. Look what I have done with my hands, with the sweat of my brow, with my careful planning and study."

Moses said long ago to the children of Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land: "When thou hast eaten and art full then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not statutes, which I command thee this day. Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied: Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage; And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God and

walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish."

"Seek Ye His Kingdom"

Let us not forget the words of Christ our Lord in Luke 12:15 to the man who was concerned only for the riches of this life: "And he said unto them, Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them saying: The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

It is my earnest prayer that in these days in which we have so much, and all around us countless millions are cold and hungry and homeless, we shall turn to God in thanksgiving for the harvest that he has given us that we might become "rich toward Him." We must prove our love for Him by doing our part in helping to feed and clothe our needy brothers and sisters around the world. It is our responsibility t bring them the gospel message o hope, love and salvation throug our Lord and Saviour Jesus Chris

PRAYER: O God, Father of us al we give thee thanks for the sunshin and the rain, for the rich soil an fruits of the field; for all of life w give thee thanks. Grant, O Goo that we may use thy wonderful gif with thanksgiving to thy glory, th relief of those who are needy, an for our own needs, through Jesu Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Religion and Political Action

"He that loveth not, knoweth no God." Love never changes. But th forms of its expression often chang so radically that we are in danger o failing to recognize them. In moder society for instance there are man economic, social, racial and interna tional relations which, in addition t other remedies, demand legislatio in order to prevent suffering, pro vide opportunities for human free dom, and promote peace. If there fore we really love those who are i need, our love must often find ex pression by urging legislatures to ac for or against specific bills. This ma seem a strange substitute for the pe sonal kindness of the good Samar tan. But true love will find its in sistent way even though it must bea the postmark of a communication t one's representative in local, nationa or world government.

"Is it not also the clear duty of Christian to participate as an activ member of whatever political part not only assures honesty and e ficiency in government, but come nearest to expressing Christian prin ciples in social, economic and worl relations? After careful study of th history, platforms and purposes o all political parties, each individua must decide for himself before Go which one most truly stands for so cial justice, brotherhood, goodne and mercy in human affairs."

(From *"Meditations Personal and Socia* by JAMES MYERS, published by the Commi sion on Worship, the Federal Council the Churches of Christ in America)

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The Country Parson Who Influenced National Affairs Kingsley of Eversley in 1848

A hundred years ago, Charles Kingsley, the rector of the rural parish of Eversley, was twenty-nine years old. The great social revolutions were shaking the continent of Europe to the foundations. In England, too, there were social movements that caused anxiety in high circles. The great popular movement was one for electoral reform, Chartism. With one exception, its demands have long since been granted. But it was viewed with concern by the English rulers of 1848.

Charles Kingsley, on learning the date of the Chartist rising, cancelled his adult evening classes and went to London. He wished to see for himself. The event moved him deeply. He observed the collapse of the great popular demonstration, but reacted differently from those in high places. The cabinet had called upon the Duke of Wellington to plan the defense of the city, if the great gathering should get out of control. The Duke was wise enough to advise that all troops be kept out of sight, and they were not needed.

A New Movement

The country parson did more than breathe the sighs of relief attributed to the cabinet. Kingsley wrote: "Pray for us that God may guide us and open our mouths to speak boldly." He helped to organize a new movement in which he fully participated. He was associated with Frederick D. Maurice, J. M. Ludlow and others. The countryman soon found himself in the midst of a movement on behalf of urban workers which was named "Christian Socialism." (This was not the first time the term was used.)

The rural pastor, who was a pioneer in what is now known as adult education, supplied literary experience, audacity and humility to the little group. Maurice, the theologian, is reported to have been the "spiritual leader"; and Ludlow, the lawyer who had studied on the continent, gave certain technical information.

These three were the center of the board of strategy. They wrote posters and then collected money in order to print them and put them up. The first step was a popular appeal to assure the working classes that there were those in the churches and in public life concerned with their condition. One poster declared that "Jesus Christ, the poor man who died for poor men, will bring freedom to you though all the Mammonites on earth are against you." The reformers also proclaimed that there were religious people willing to devote themselves to improving working conditions.

Implementation

The little working group labored on. They began by assuring those who heard them that they believed in the long way home—the regeneration of the human heart rather than a quick device. But they also searched for a scheme whereby social arrangements might encourage what they regarded as highest and best in personal experience. It is said that the works of Carlyle gave them "general inspiration."

The practical plan they recommended for organization was one Ludlow had observed on the continent. It was a producer cooperative, or a self-governing factory owned and operated by the workers themselves. At the time, in the first flush of the industrial revolution, there were those who advocated that the workers themselves should own the factories and elect the managers. The Christian socialists thus at first favored producer cooperation instead of a method of consumer cooperation which was just beginning in a street named Toad Lane in the town of Rochdale.

Pampbleteering

But this was not enough. There had to be a magazine—what movement doth not require one? Surely genius was available for authorship. Devoted apostles would fill the pages. But Ludlow, the editor, soon learned otherwise. Genius did not pour forth and the editor wrote half the contents himself.

Then there were the tracts. The great tracts of the Oxford movement seem to have been in mind. It is recorded that Kingsley had doubts, but Ludlow and Maurice persuaded him that there had to be new tracts for the times, named "Christian Socialism."

Parson Lot

For writings in the tracts and the periodical, Kingsley took the pen name of Parson Lot, and into these he poured his passion. He once remarked at a meeting that he felt as lonely as Lot in the cities on the plain.

In 1850 it was reported that the periodical had 1,500 subscribers. This brought a mixed response. Some, it seems, shouted with as much joy as Englishmen did on such occasions. Others believed that the paper should have many more readers.

These writings were not favorably received by the custodians of good literature. The Edinburgh Review and the Quarterly Review condemned them. Many years later the dignified London Times sought in an editorial to "draw a decent curtain" over them.

Of course, the Christian socialists went in for "social legislation." They helped to put through Parliament in 1852 the law permitting the incorporation of the struggling cooperative societies, including the consumer groups which were eventually to become widespread.

Projects Ended

All the projects in producer cooperation ended in 1854, while publications were suspended in 1852. "Let us say little and work the more," remarked the countryman in London, who was then reading Jeremiah more frequently than before. The workers were unprepared for the tasks of management, and it was too hard to decide who should be elected the boss. The experience in England with these early cooperative factories was the same as that of the United States, even though here many labor leaders were interested in them in the years between 1850 and 1890. In England, however, there is still a small urban producer cooperative movement.

A Permanent Influence

The short-lived movement for Christian Socialism became a spiritual precedent in England. The stream of thought appeared in part later among the Fabians, the Labor Party, the people who attended the Malvern Conference, the present government.

Most of all, the movement of 1848 created a tradition in the churches. In England, Christian socialist movements have persisted. These have engaged, as did the men of 1848, in a struggle with unsocial Christians and un-Christian socialists in behalf of a set of values still regarded as significant.

"Flying Parsons" for Dakotas

Three Boston University theological students were assigned by the Division of Home Missions of The Methodist Church to serve as "flying parsons" last summer for eleven churches dispersed over 8,500 square miles in the Dakota Conference.

All three received their Bachelor of Sacred Theology degrees in May. They were Paul S. Kurtz, pastor of the Plainville (Mass.) Methodist Church; Clarence G. Spellman, pastor of the East Douglas (Mass.) Methodist church; and Murray V. Hyde, of Castle Rock, Wash.

The airborne men utilized a plane provided by the Division of Home Missions, and officiated at Sunday and midweek services. Located in predominantly ranching country, the population is so widely scattered that it has been impossible to support ministers.

And Now—Woman Named Best Farmer!

• On the Radio Quiz Show, F.R. America, in Chicago, Mrs. Katheri Porter, of Orangeburg, S. C., wo over three male farmers.

Mrs. Porter is a 4-H Club lead in her home community. She lives o a farm of 235 acres.

Rural Health Front

Much new activity is noted many dispatches from the rur health front.

The American Medical Associ tion, Chicago, has published pamphlet on the third national co ference on Rural Health which, th year in Chicago, dealt with "th health status of the rural child Health handicaps are imposed o rural children by the "maldistrib tion of medical services and faciliti between rural and urban areas." seems everything is poorly distri uted in America—dentists, docto nurses, hospitals, child care age cies.

Numerous child health progran are described. Many rural young pe ple are becoming aware of the s riousness of the health situatio The recent hospital and constru tion act is reported to be especial directed toward improving rur medical service.

The A.M.A. has also published discussion of rural health on a r gional basis, held at Denver this yea The people in the entire Roc Mountain area have shown an i creasing interest in rural healt Towns are going ahead with plar

They are making progress in ho pital construction in spite of a sca city of materials and equipment. Do tors are urged to accept more r sponsibility for the health educatio of young children.

The first annual Michigan rur health conference is reported in a illustrated booklet. Many agenci had a part in the arrangemen Louis Bromfield spoke on "The R lation of Good Soil, Good Agricu ture, and a Sound Economy to th Health and Well-Being of Rur Communities."

A Platform of Rural Church Advance

The National Planning Conference for Northern Baptist Churches Town and Country, held at Green ke, Wisconsin, July 28-August 3, 48, was a significant event in the story of the Northern Baptist Conntion.

This conference, sponsored by the sociated Home Mission Agencies the denomination, was called for e purpose of planning a program d strategy of rural church work. ne hundred and thirty pastors, layen, directors of town and country ork, rural women workers, educars, national and state executives, ard members and others gave unvided and enthusiastic attention to e planning of an advance program.

Included in the findings of the conence is a platform of advance, th goals to be achieved by the 51 Northern Baptist Quadrennial onference on the church in town d country. The platform is prented herewith:

At The Threshold of Opportunity

The Christian church in America ces today an unparalleled oppority in its program and ministry town and country areas. If this oprtunity is not grasped within the xt decade it may be lost to the gan forces now at work in rural e.

Rural America is still predomitely Protestant in background and eference. It offers a fertile field for ew Testament evangelism. Populaon shifts from urban centers to ral areas offer a new and unique allenge. Youth in the country prents a tremendous potential in adership, ready for enlistment and aining. The rural church, long a ajor source of high idealism, affords natural opportunity for presenting e New Testament objectives of aristian living that transform the hole of personal, family and comunity life.

The destiny of our denomination, deed of all Protestantism, will be termined in large measure by the way in which this challenge is met.

A Serious Facing of This Challenge Demands:

A Leadership Adequate for the Task

Pastors called of God to the rural fields and willing to go through the discipline of thorough training, so that they may not only preach with conviction but also become competent in worship, teaching, counseling and community leadership. This requires specialized training in seminaries, agricultural colleges and Rural Church Centers.

Directors of Town and Country Work qualified by actual successful experience and personal leadership.

Women especially trained to direct programs of leadership training in local churches and larger parishes.

Sympathetic, high calibre leadership in denominational agencies and schools.

Skilled writers to prepare textbooks and resource materials for both pastors and lay people in rural churches.

An Adequate Support of This Leadership

Beyond question the majority of Northern Baptist rural ministers are underpaid. A rural minister cannot do effective work, or be expected to spend his life in that field, unless he has a salary adequate for both his work and his living.

The solution calls for adoption of adequate salary standards by state and national agencies, and for local churches willing to face the issue and to help provide such salaries.

Increased Denominational Cooperation

By means of a more adequate representation of our rural constituency on denominational boards and committees. Through the Associated Home Mission Agencies, giving larger place to Rural Church Advance in the building of a unified Home Mission Program for Northern Baptists.

Better Public Relations

The objectives and achievements of the rural church must be compellingly publicized and dramatized. New and daring methods must be devised so that rural churches increasingly share their experiences with the whole denomination.

Where to Begin

The societies, conventions, agencies, schools, churches and members of the Northern Baptist Convention are invited to share in a program of advance, with selected goals set for achievement by the 1951 meeting of the Northern Baptist Quadrennial Conference on the Church in Town and Country. Together, let us extend the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, depending upon prayer and the companionship of Christ who wrought so wonderfully among country people.

A Platform of Immediate Advance

Toward a Trained Ministry

1. Call immediately upon all resources of the denomination to unite in a vigorous program of recruitment.
2. Establish departments of rural work in at least three Northern Baptist seminaries by 1951.
3. Establish fellowships to enable competent men to train for teaching positions.
4. Greatly strengthen and expand the in-service training program at Rural Church Center, with a goal of 125 ministers and their wives per year.
5. Sponsor a mass attack on the problem of in-service training in cooperation with seminaries and colleges through regional training centers.
6. To meet the demand for rural ministers quickly, establish as an emergency measure two special short-course training projects for mature, competent, deeply-consecrated candidates for the ministry.

Toward Adequate Support of the Ministry

7. Keep the agencies promoting stewardship informed of the need, and aid these agencies in the preparation of literature suitable for churches in town and country.
8. Move in the direction of securing (1) adequate representation of rural Baptists on the Committees of the Crusade for Christ through Stewardship 1949-1950, and, (2) a program suited to the rural situation.
9. Enlist the support of the Layman's Council of The Northern Baptist Convention and the state Men's Councils in the appointment of committees to bring to the attention of all churches the critical need of providing adequate ministerial salaries.
10. Interest each state convention to seek each year to have an additional 5% of the churches adopt a definite program of proportionate giving.
11. Urge that states, at the rate of one a year, adopt an adequate minimum salary plan.
12. Focus the 1949-50 united emphasis of the national and state departments of town and country upon the productive home, related skills and family budgeting.

Toward Better Public Relations

13. Study by the proposed Commission on Rural Advance of ways and means of securing good public relations for the rural church through denominational channels.
14. Increased Baptist representation at interdenominational meetings on rural work, such as the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country.
15. Raise membership in the Baptist Town and Country Fellowship to one thousand by 1951.
16. Cooperate with the Protestant radio and film commissions in obtaining true presentations of rural values.
17. Establish at least one radio workshop for rural workers, to be sponsored by the Radio Committee of the Northern Baptist Convention.
18. Foster good urban-rural relations through interchange of leadership.
19. Stimulate a study by an educational institution to discover the factors which produce public attitudes toward the rural church.

Toward a Better Program in the Local Church

20. Restudy of its plan of organization by each town and country church in order to have an effective church council, or its equivalent, at work by 1951.
21. Enrichment of its worship program by each town and country church through use of special materials such as "Hymns of the Rural Spirit," and by the observance of such special occasions as Rural Life Sunday, Harvest Festival, Family Week and others.
22. Continuation in town and country churches of the Crusade for Christ through Evangelism until 1951, with such adaptations in the program as are needed to fit the distinctive requirements of town and country churches.
23. Effort, in cooperation with urban churches, to develop special techniques for the conservation of church members who move from country to city and from city to country.
24. Organization of a Home Department on the plan offered by the Board of Education and Publication in fifty percent of town and country churches by 1951.
25. Participation in the Northern Baptist Convention program of Juvenile Protection by encouraging attendance of rural church leaders at the Recreational Laboratories at Green Lake, Wisconsin, Block Island, R. I., and others which may be set up; and by creating a program of leisure-time activities adequat for the needs of young peopl in the area of each church.
26. In three areas a church-spor sored program of settlement c Christian families in town an country communities.

Organization and Relationships

27. Urge denominational agencie to advise their nominating com mittees at the earliest possibl date to plan for adequate repr sentation of rural lay peopl farm and non-farm, on thei Boards and Committees.
28. Propose to the Associated Hom Mission Agencies at its Decen ber meeting the forming of Commission on Rural advanc as outlined in the findings c the Planning Conference, an that the Commission begin t function immediately on ap pointment in carrying out th program for rural advance, wit action on matters definitely r ferred to it.
29. Suggest to the leaders of th National Convocation on th Church in Town and Countr that the Convention meet an nually with the exception c the fourth year, and that as Bap tists we promote the attendanc of at least 125 Baptists at thos sessions.
30. Provide that every fourth yea be left for denominational co ferences, and that there b projected a Northern Bapti Quadrennial Conference on th Church in Town and Countr in 1951.
31. Promote increasing cooperatio between our Home Missio Societies and the Home Missio Council of North America, i cluding its program on tow and country.
32. Urge our State Convention without surrendering any their historic Baptist conne tions, to cooperate as fully possible with State Councils churches and their comity agre ments in overchurched and u churched areas.

3. Exploration by the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society with State Conventions of the possibility of joint appointments (which will include local support) of women missionaries for rural service in associations, or other areas within a state; increasing the number of such women workers as rapidly as possible.

Special to Dear Reader: Go Thou and Do Likewise!

PARISH OF HOLSTON HILLS METHODIST

To the Editors of
Town and Country Church:

May I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere appreciaton for your wonderful publication, *Town and Country Church.* I have just received my September issue and I believe it is the finest yet.

Every month I read over the "What You Can Do" column and wonder if I am doing my part to keep this great journal of rural life going. I have presented it to our Conference Rural Life Committee. It is certainly coming to Holston Conference.

I am enclosing two of our most recent parish papers. You will note two terms that are new to most of Methodism and perhaps to much of Protestantism. These words or terms are "Pilot Charge" and "District Rural Life Worker." The former is sponsored by the Conference at large, under the direct supervision of the Inter-Board Council. The latter is sponsored by and under the supervision of the W.S.C.S. of the Conference. I am not much of a writer, but perhaps you would be interested in an article about one or both of these embryonic attempts.

Still another possibility would be some kind of an article about our first year in this Pilot Charge. Our parish records will have been completed for this year in this Pilot Charge. Our parish records will have been completed for this year by the time of the Annual Conference, the first week in October. If you are interested, such a story about the parish could be used in the December or January issue.

If possible, I want to help your great publication continue its amazing effectiveness. I am open to any suggestions as to how I may help.

Thanking you again for the *Town and Country Church,* and assuring you of my continued cooperation, I am

Very sincerely yours,
James E. Hankins, *Pastor*
Dungannon, Virginia

Use of Arts and Crafts

The September issue of the *Star of Hope,* Nashville, Tenn., publishes an editorial by Mrs. Flora Craig on the above subject. The author says:

"Everyone has creative ability, and that ability grows with use. Arts and Crafts aim to stimulate an interest in creative activities both through individual and group participation and through understanding and appreciation of the work of others.

"Making things with the hands is one of the most soul-satisfying experiences of the human race because it helps the individual to put into concrete form his own feelings. Making things with our hands is one language of expression for most of us, and the craving for the beautiful is also nearly universal and deep down at the very core of our being.

"The love of beauty lies close to religion. All through the centuries men have labored bit by bit to build their cathedrals, and in so doing, have built themselves, have become what they were not before."

Photograph by Wilma Wilcox

Member to Member Hook-Up

"Ah! Ah! Ah! don't touch that dial." This is the powerful little "three-watter" (Dungannon, Ft. Blackmore and Slant) down in the Clinch Valley, sending a message to all the members and friends of the Parish of Holston Hills.

We are "on the air" to announce one of the most heartening and encouraging pieces of news it has ever been your pleasure to hear. That is, it is this type of news if you are interested in seeing the gospel of the Master promoted and advanced in our valley.

The rural life worker, about whom you have heard, has arrived to help us in our parish duties. Miss Myrtle Dulaney is a graduate of Emory and Henry College and of Scarritt College where she recently received her Masters Degree in Christian Education with specialized field work in rural areas.

Miss Dulaney and your pastor will work together in an effort to help all of us grow in knowledge and spirit of our Saviour. As we have said before, her task will not be to do our work for us but to help us learn more about how it can and should be done.

Our worker is employed and paid by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The District furnishes her car and we are supplying her board and room. Let us bear in mind that Miss Dulaney is a *District* worker. After the first six months in our parish she is "on call" to any other charge in the district.

You will see her in your homes, in the W.S.C.S. meetings, in our Board of Stewards meetings, in the Board of Education meetings, in the Bible Schools, Sunday Schools, and church services.

She is here to help us! We can be helped and enlightened only as we cooperate with her in her efforts.

Miss Dulaney will be located in Dungannon. However, her work will be in all three communities. We will try to answer any questions you may have concerning our worker and her task among us.

Tune in again for more news of the parish and its work.

—From *The Parish Pioneer*
JAMES E. HANKINS, *Editor*
Dungannon, Virginia

Examples of Larger Parish

• One of the most effective organizational methods for strengthening the rural church is that of the so-called "larger parish." A larger parish is composed of several individual churches, often interdenominational, bound together in united Christian effort.

The Parish of the More Abundant Life

One such experiment in greater effectiveness through organized cooperation is The Parish of the More Abundant Life, a larger parish made up of nine cooperating Presbyterian churches around Charleston, Illinois. In this set-up, the larger parish idea is combined with the idea of a Seminary Training Parish. There is a full-time parish director who does not minister to any one of the churches, and there are four student pastors from the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. The Rev. Harry E. Bicksler is the parish director. Each member church retains its own autonomy, is self-supporting, each having its own budget, each paying its own minister's salary, etc.

For those projects which the churches do cooperatively as a parish there is a parish treasury, out of which come the salary and expenses of the full-time director of the parish, the expenses and salary of a director of religious education, and expenses for similar parish-wide projects.

Each of the ministers in the larger parish, in addition to his ministry to one or more of the local churches, has a specialized function in the larger parish. This is one of the points at which the idea of a "group ministry" has come into the practice of this larger parish. For example, one pastor is also the parish minister of music; another is minister of education; a third is minister of youth. Two of them working together are responsible for the monthly parish-wide paper. Each of these men is aided by a laymen's committee made up of representatives from all of the nine churches in the parish. These committees help plan for and unify the programs with which they are concerned in the local churches.

The Harrison County (Mo.) Larger Parish

Harrison County, Missouri, is the site of a similar experiment in the idea of the larger parish. Organized in the fall of 1945 after careful, thorough study by denominational leaders, it is a cooperative effort made to strengthen the almost desperate small-town and country Methodist churches in a largely Methodist area. The Methodist Board of Missions has pledged $1,700 a year for three years to help start the program.

Seven ministers cooperate in this larger parish. The fellowship of the ministry is cited as one of the greatest features of the program.

Quarterly parish-wide laymen's meetings are held: the first meeting is for the purpose of setting up the year's parish program; the second is a Lord's Acre meeting to compare procedures and results of the previous year and to plan for the coming year; the third is a song-fest; the fourth, and largest, is an all-day Sunday meeting held in a fairground pavilion.

A monthly parish paper is printed and mailed from the parish director's office to each of the 1,300 members of the churches in the parish. It contains sixteen pages of typewritten material, and the annual cost of about $500 is shared proportionately by the member churches.

Other projects and programs undertaken by the Harrison County Larger Parish include the Lord's Acre program, vacation church schools, evangelistic campaigns, credit and non-credit leadership training classes, and youth and young adult sub-district programs.

The leaders of the Harrison

Christian Church
Carthage, Ill.

County Larger Parish are confident that it will be well established and completely independent of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church within three years of its start. It will be able to provide from its own resources an effective program of service to the people in the area which it serves.

The Newtown Creek (N. Y.) Larger Parish

In central New York state another rapidly-growing larger parish experiment is being carried on. Going under the name of the Newton Creek Larger Parish, it is composed of the three Methodist churches of Breesport, Erin and Sullivanville. It is served by two full-time ministers, and has a total membership of 250 active members in a total population of 1,854 farm and factory workers living in an area of eighty square miles.

Aiming to provide adequate trained leadership to the churches involved, and at the same time provide internship experience for young pastors and training for supply pastors, the progress of this plan in one year's time has been, as in other similar experiments, slow but steady.

Summary

In the projects described above, it is seen that a life has come into the churches through this spirit of cooperation. Needed are careful study, patient leadership, and a wider lay participation in the total parish program. Through such experiments as these may the Kingdom of God grow in our rural areas—not through the divisiveness and competition which have too long characterized our churches but through a spirit of Christ-like cooperation which is a true manifestation of our Lord's command that ye love one another.

—The Rural Church,
Garrett Biblical Institute

Shakers Leave New York

New York's last Shakers have moved to join some of their sect at Hancock, Mass. Seven members recently left New Lebanon, N. Y., to join six others in Massachusetts. Others are reported to be living at Sabbath Day Lake, Maine, and Canterbury, N. H.

Once there were about 5,000 Shakers in the U.S. Now there are reported to be only about 60, and their average age is 75 years. Since the Shaker doctrine forbade marriage, membership could be enlisted only through converts.

The Shakers distinguished themselves in practical economic projects. They made good furniture and ran productive farms. Today one of their number is a specialist in repairing old clocks.

In Albany County, N. Y., great Shaker revival meetings were held as early as 1779. Mother Ann Lee, the founder, went from there through New England, making converts and preaching: "Put your hands to work and your hearts to God."

The remaining Shakers believe in the industrious life. They claim they have more ability than any modern "relief officials." They also say they have never yet had to call on any government for aid.

Convocation Notes

The fifth annual National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held in San Jose, California, November 9-11, 1948.

The Convocation is sponsored by the Committee on Town and Country of the Home Missions Council of North America, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and the International Council of Religious Education.

Speakers scheduled to address the Convocation include Dr. Paul H. Landis, Washington State College; Rev. John B. Ketcham, International Council of Religious Education; Dr. Ross Sanderson, Congregational-Christian Churches; Miss Marjorie Minkler, Woman's Division, Methodist Church; and Dr. Elliott L. Fisher, the Methodist Church.

Throughout the Convocation 15 separate commissions will convene daily to consider methods of improving the rural church and to formulate definite recommendations for future planning. Many denominational conferences will be held as an integral part of the Convocation.

A report of the Convocation will be published in the January issue of *Town and Country Church.*

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

In-Service Training

• Rural Church Center, Green Lake, Wisconsin, announces three schools for ministers in town and country, to be held during the autumn, winter and spring of 1948-49. The dates of these schools are as follows:

Fall School—November 9-19, 1948.

Winter School—January 25-February 18, 1949.

Spring School—March 2-29, 1949.

The courses offered at the autumn school include Financing the Local Church, Professor Luther Powell, instructor; The Group Method and Cooperative Technique, Mark Rich, instructor; The Rural Family, Mrs. Lulu Hathaway, instructor; Building a Program of Service, instructor to be selected; A Study of the Rural Values in Genesis, Lawrence Janssen and Robert Frerichs, instructors; Handicrafts, Lawrence Janssen, instructor. Mrs. Robert Frerichs will devote five hours to an introduction to music for the rural church.

The Schools are operated on a cooperative plan which keeps costs at a minimum. Pastors interested in further information may write Rural Church Center, Northern Baptist Assembly, Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Country Diaries

• The *Manchester Guardian,* England, publishes brief country diaries in each issue. One account tells of a rose festival in Askham, "a charming old-world Westmoreland village." The procession moved among "noble oaks and sycamores." This reminds one of the festival of the roses associated with the Lutheran Church of Manheim, Pa., where each year one red rose is paid as rental to a descendant of the donor of the land, Baron von Stiegel. Several other Pennsylvania churches apparently have the same custom. (The *Manchester Guardian* also publishes in each issue reviews of religious books.)

Christian Community Builders

MOSES N. DeLANEY

• For millions of Christians there remains a wide gap between the sacred and the secular tasks of life. The aim of this article, therefore, is twofold: first, to set forth, in brief, the Christian attitude toward the sacred and the secular; and, secondly, to give as many examples as possible of this attitude.

The Sacred and the Secular

Many people have been given the impression that life is divided into two main areas of activities—the sacred and the secular. By sacred is meant those activities directly connected with the local church. Thus, a school teacher, a nurse, a business man, a farmer or a brick mason comes to think of himself as working for the Lord only through specific tasks at and through the church. These tasks include such activities as singing in the choir, serving as ushers and officials in various organizations, teaching Sunday school classes and young people's groups, and attending worship services. Through these activities they declare, "We are serving the Lord!"

In other tasks in which they are engaged they think of themselves as doing secular work. Consequently, many of these workers think and act as though their sacred activities were completely separated from their week-day engagements. For them there is a very real line of demarcation between the sacred and secular engagements of life.

A Unified View of Life

The line of demarcation between the sacred and the secular is certainly an imaginary man-made one that should not exist for the Christian. The validity of this truth may be illustrated briefly through three ties: (1) *natural creation,* (2) *social contact* and (3) *the testimony of Jesus.*

(1) *Natural Creation.* By natural creation the Christian finds himself, like all mankind, housed in the physical body. Hence, our knowledge of the soul and spirit comes primarily through this bodily existence. The body itself has been described as the temple of the indwelling Spirit of God. It is the earthly abode of the soul and spirit of mankind. Assuming these facts to be true it follows that man's care of the body may serve as an index of his concern for the indwelling Spirit of God; that neglect of the body, whether by force of poverty, ignorance and superstition, or influence of wealth in self-indulgence, will invariably affect the very soul of man.

Hence, separation of the soul from the body must be left to the judgment and work of God alone. While in this existence, however, man must come to appreciate their interdependence and inseparable nature as a channel through which the creative power and beneficent grace of God may work!

(2) *Social Contact.* In addition to being unified within himself the Christian finds himself a part of the group. He is born into a family which in turn is a part of one or more larger groups. All of these should ultimately give him a sense of being a member of the great family of God. A member of the group develops a sense of social responsibility.

He discovers that all of his conduct must be in consideration of the needs and problems of others. His life in the community must be so unified that it becomes impossible for him to promote his own welfare at the expense of others. He will not separate making a living from living the Christian life.

(3) *The Testimony of Jesus.* Finally, and most important, is the testimony of Jesus Christ Himself. In Him is found a unified and ordered view of life. The Heavenly Father is the giver of the daily bread for body and soul. Jesus knew the danger of both poverty and riches to the soul of man, and was concerned with feeding and healing the hungry

f body and soul. He did not divide fe into the sacred and the secular. ll of life to Him was viewed as oly, and a sacred trust.

According to this unified Christian iew of life, the ministry of Christ ermeates every phase. All persons ho are engaged in any tasks that ontribute to the serving of human eeds and the development of hristlike character and conduct hare in this broader ministry of hrist. They are Christian ministers.

These tasks include the work of he minister, the school teacher, the ibrarian, public health agents, directors of recreation, the home demnstration agent, the business man, ll public welfare agents, civic leadrs, and the workman in laboratory, ield, factory and home. When seen n relationship to the Christian view f life, the tasks of all these workers re not secular but sacred.

hristian Community Builders

Obviously it will not be possible o discuss each one of these commuity builders in detail. However, hree are selected on which detailed llustrative material is available; hen, in a general way, the Chrisian significance and implications of he others will be pointed out.

(1) *The Christian Minister.* Beause of what should be the miniser's breadth of vision and noble alling in the community he is menioned first. With a great vision and lear understanding of his calling he minister can be of inestimable alue in giving his community vision nd insight into the sanctity of all hases of life and its activities. Such minister is not only a priest but a rophet, a seer, an educator and a reat leader for his people.

He can convey this vision of servce to laymen who in turn carry out he actual performance of the task. lso, he can and must help all who re engaged in worthwhile tasks to ee them in relation to the Chrisian way of life. In that way, he will elp to make the division between he secular and the sacred disappear nd all tasks of life become holy.

(2) *The School Teacher.* The potential role of the school teacher has yet to come into the fullness of its power and dignity. In face of the vast contribution the school teacher makes in bringing enlightenment, information, literacy and wholesome attitudes toward life, it is indeed tragic that for many his work is relegated to the secular tasks of life.

Increasingly the task of the school teacher has come to mean more than the teaching of the "three R's." Besides, it deals with many of the practical problems of life. The Lucille Hunter School in Raleigh is a good example of this more inclusive service. Here pre-vocational instruction in sewing, housecleaning, cooking, good manners and courtesy have been introduced. The girls who have finished the course have been termed "efficient homemakers" as a result of their training. Plans are now in the making which will offer a shop program for boys which will include training in wood working, electricity, metal work and shoe repair. Mastery of these simple but useful skills is education that will not be divorced from the needs and problems of life.

(3) *The Librarian.* Closely allied with the work of the school teacher is that of the librarian who has the great responsibility of selecting and making available all types of literature to young and old. Since the mind is the agency through which the soul is fed, it is of tremendous importance that good literature be put within the reach of all people.

Throughout our country today there is a keen interest in good reading. For some rural communities public and private funds have been provided for library extension service as is evidenced by regular trips of the bookmobile.

(4) *Other Builders.* Ten other builders of the Christian community have already been listed. These, too, may share in the fuller ministry of Christ in their work during the week.

It may seem hardly necessary to mention the Christian significance of the public health agent. Yet there is basic need for health to do good work and to enjoy life. The New Testament is writ large with the healing ministry of Jesus. Closely related to health is wholesome recreational activity.

Although play life has been looked upon with disdain by many Christians in the past, more and more we are coming to realize that those who direct wholesome recreational activities have holy work to do. They have a vital function to fulfill in helping to mold the character and conduct of millions of people.

The work of the home demonstration agent speaks for itself. In the midst of disrupted family and home life those who cultivate and teach the art of making homes are preserving the very strength of the community as a whole.

The man engaged in business, according to the unified view of life, can no longer have a clear conscience when his business may be destructive to the personality of hundreds of people in his community.

The public welfare agent keeps a watchful eye on all of the causes for social maladjustment in the community and provides corrective measures. Civic leaders join arms with them in bringing to the attention of the community the various needs and problems with constructive ways of meeting them.

Finally, underlying the efforts of all the community builders is the strength and toil of the workman in laboratory, field, factory and home. Each forms an indispensable link in the chain that binds the community together and makes it a fit place in which to live.

Summary

All of these are laborers in holy and sacred tasks. Each makes a contribution to the total welfare of the community which no other can make. Each, if imbued with the Spirit of Christ, may serve the Lord through special duties at and through the local church. But, in the broader sense, he is also a participant in the work of God during the other six days of the week. He is a builder of the "Beloved Community of the Family of God."

Book Reviews

Twenty-Five Years of Crusading. By Raymond P. Witte. The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, Iowa. 1948. $3.00.

A Hymn to Work. By Josephine Drabek. Grailville, Loveland, Ohio. 1948. 75c.

Rural Synthesis—the Religious Basis of Rural Culture. By Martin Thornton. Skeffington and Son, Ltd., London and New York. 1948. 8s/6d.

Here are three works affirming religious philosophies of rural life, the first two by Roman Catholic authors, the third by an Anglican.

Brother Raymond Witte writes under the title of *Twenty-Five Years of Crusading,* "a history of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference." In Protestant circles there is a good deal of interest in the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and it seems appropriate to indicate in full the nature and scope of Brother Raymond's work.

When Brother Raymond was asked to undertake the writing of the history, he was not familiar with the origins or past work of the Conference. He found interesting precursors in the Irish Catholic Colonization Association which, many years ago, helped to settle Roman Catholic families on the land; the Central Verein; the Co-Op Parish Activities Service of Father Nell, a rural priest in southern Illinois.

Archbishop Cicognani, the Apostolic delegate to the United States, contributes an informing introduction, crediting Father O'Hara, now Bishop of Kansas City, with having initiated the present movement in the year 1921.

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference has held probably the largest conventions of Christian people interested in rural life ever held in the United States. It has encouraged vacation schools. It has cooperated with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in organizing intensive campaigns for catechetical instruction in rural areas. It has sponsored numerous schools for rural priests which have offered broad curricula—the Catholics are not as hesitant as some Protestants to offer courses in economics and cooperatives.

Pope Pius XII has assigned as the Patron and Protector of the Conference St. Isidore, the Farmer, and has authorized the feast of this Saint to be celebrated in all dioceses of the U.S. every year on March 22.

Protestants know about the Conference largely through the travels and talks of the Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G. Ligutti, the executive secretary. Msgr. Ligutti was parish priest at Granger, Iowa, where he was associated with a successful homesteading project. This vigorous apostle of rural ways of life has become a most influential person in many councils. He has distinguished himself as a cooperator on common tasks with many who are not Roman Catholics. One interesting fact about him revealed in this book is that recently he reduced his salary, after the new office and home was purchased in Des Moines.

The Conference has a hard time raising money. It complains that the teachers in the seminaries are urban-minded. It is not listened to by all bishops and archbishops. It struggles with its publications. But it has become one of the most significant agencies on the American rural and religious scene.

A Hymn to Work is well illustrated with beautiful photographs. It is presented "to the young women of the United States and Canada." Most of the photographs were taken at the School of Apostolate at Grailville, Loveland, Ohio. The courses at Grailville are designed to create apostolic young women with a vision of their task as "restorers of home, family and society," and with the courage and competence to participate in organized lay action in their own surroundings.

A basic course lasting a year is begun each October. Many week-end and one-week schools are also held in the summer months. Emphasis has been placed "on the beauty and dignity of manual labor." The aim is to "transform the daily work into a holy worship, a joyous praise of God."

Martin Thornton, who writes *Rural Synthesis,* an English book, was once a farm operator and is now a clergyman. He is not a member of the school of thought that emphasizes local self-sufficiency, as preached by a group in England who hold that it is "the natural order." He thinks that mechanization will go on.

Yet he defends and reiterates theses often heard that "the material *and* spiritual welfare of humanity is rooted in the soil," or "the land is the basis of *all* human development," or "the farmer is the backbone, the very life blood, of all civilization." These are often oratorical flourishes, he admits. Yet he finds elements of truth in these generalizations, and contends that "we are confronted with a truth that raises a most formidable host of theological, political and agricultural questions."

Mr. Thornton says: "The land is, in fact, culture." But the Land can never be adequately expressed except as the moulding of nature by mankind is carried on with the Divine purpose.

There are chapters on "The Land in Poetry," "The Agricultural Ethics," "The Prophetic Element in Agriculture." The author would have the village pastor regularly help in the threshing and says that when he does he is "nearer to his true vocation" than when organizing various social functions.

In a chapter on "The Rural Liturgy," he advocates acknowledging the Land as an unceasing gift not only at harvest, but also at "haytime, lambing time and all occasions of common concern." He thinks Rogationtide has been neglected. "The village church is a house of prayer and it is to be used as such by those whose primary propensities call for a house of prayer rather than an academic lecture theater."

BENSON Y. LANDIS

he Choice is Always Ours. Edited by Dorothy Berkeley Phillips, Lucile M. Nixon and Elizabeth Boyden Howes. Richard R. Smith, New York. 1948. $4.50.

This thorough book is described ı the title page as "an Anthology ı the Religious Way," chosen from ;ychological, religious, philosophi-ıl and biographical sources. On the ıcket the publishers call it both a ›urce book for spiritual progression ıd a synthesis of psychological and ·ligious insight.

This is, of course, a general and ot a rural book, but it is our policy t times to call attention to works ıat will be of interest to all religious ·orkers, urban and rural. In view of ıe current interest in psychology nd religion, this book is here re-iewed.

Through 530 pages are given 430 ·lections compiled to meet the needs f persons who ask, "How can I live reatively and interdependently in his fear-haunted world? How can I iscover my real self? How can I find ;od?"

There are three main sections, The Way, The Techniques, the)utcomes." Emphasis is on *follow-ng* along the way.

Among 170 authors quoted are Meister Eckhart, Carl Jung, Fritz Künkel, Francois Fenelon, Evelyn Jnderhill, Mohandas Gandhi, Rufus ones—indicating the wide range of he materials, and the inclusive in-erests of the compilers. A number f anonymous authors contributed naterials especially for the book.

Fortunately, these numerous quo-ations are both skilfully arranged nd interspersed with introductions nd notes which guide the reader.

This reviewer found he could read asily through contributions by nany authors. That was a good test f the editors' competence.

Certainly, the minister will find n this unusual work rich treasure-ıouses which will be rewarding in he form of reading, personal coun-eling and preaching.

BENSON Y. LANDIS

The Home of the Rural Pastor. By Ralph A. Felton. Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J. 1948. 112 pages; 70 photographs. 40 cents each, quantity rates.

This is a study of 1171 rural pastors' homes. It was initiated to determine two things: the existing standard in size, equipment and state of repair, and the attitude of the pastors as to the adequacy or inadequacy of these.

If one does not argue with the attitudes expressed concerning the use, the function and the nature of the pastor's home, the pamphlet will be found loaded with numerous helpful ideas and suggestions for improving the pastor's home. Most of these ideas and suggestions are so couched as to become goads toward the author's philosophy of the use, function and nature of the pastor's home. An ideal and a standard is being promoted. This will irritate some readers but I would encourage them to continue through to the end in careful study of the information presented.

Most rural churches can greatly enhance the appeal of their field of service by paying strict attention to the ideas, suggestions and information herein presented. The majority of ministers are keenly aware of social status and cherish the opportunity of being challenged by their congregation to measure up to the status set forth in a "Standard A" equipment for a rural parsonage. (see page 104.)

If the board of trustees in every rural church and the parsonage committee of every women's society were to give this pamphlet careful study, I believe a big step would soon be taken toward a solution of the shortage of rural ministers.

DON F. PIELSTICK

For a work to be esteemed good . . . it will have to satisfy the demand of all those great masses of people who are situated in the natural conditions of laborious life.

—Walt Whitman

Church Music Appreciation

• Plans for "Developing Church Music Appreciation" are published in the September issue of *The Pastor,* Nashville, Tenn. The author, Garland Evans Hopkins, says that "a few words about a hymn or anthem or organ offertory will call it to the congregation's attention," and also recommends "Evensong" and "Classical Hour" recorded programs as aids in developing church music appreciation.

Canadian Girls Become "Circuit Riders"

• Twenty-three Canadian girls, in training in United Church colleges, went into frontier provinces last summer on horseback, in buggies or in old automobiles to do the work of ministers. Religious News Service reported that each had from two to eight "preaching points" on her charge, and received from the Home Mission Board $16 a week plus travel expenses and board.

Glen Homestead

• At Glen Homestead, Yellow Springs, Ohio, Ralph Templin has conducted a work camp and school of community living. The program included informal discussions, study and activities in the small community and the decentralist way of living.

Recreation included various events in Glen Helen's 940 acres of woods, folk-singing, folk-dancing and other "self-made fun."

Work camp members were both men and women, "the principal requirements being a responsible attitude toward life, the desire to discover a better way of living and the spirit of open inquiry."

The work camp cost was "one dollar a day, or more or less, according to ability to pay or good will to help others."

A Prayer in Autumn

O Lord of the Harvest, we thank Thee for the joys of the harvest. We thank Thee for the joys of wholesome material things, the fruits of garden and field and orchard, the increase of flock and herd. We praise Thee that man doth not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

We acknowledge our gratitude for the Thanksgiving festival of harvest, of history and of home. As the falling leaves, the decay of vegetation and the chill of autumnal rain remind us of the certain end of our earthly life, we praise Thee for all saints and for all souls that have departed this life in the true faith of Thy Holy Name. May we be aware of the spiritual presence of those whom we have loved long since and lost a while. We thank Thee that the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God. Make us to be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Significance of Rural Church

• Pastors are working like beavers to secure our rural heritage—a heritage that has been endangered because too many of us have been taking it for granted. The church in the rural areas has not paid sufficient attention to the economic and social forces which reshape rural communities.

Trends cannot be stopped but trends can be directed. It is the church's concern that the changes which take place in rural America will give us communities conducive to the development of a Christian people. The Lutheran Church cannot just let things happen. Her message must give character to the communities she serves.

The progressive spirit of many of our pastors indicates that they are taking measure of the forces which endanger our rural heritage. This is evident from the articles rural pastors are writing for church periodicals; the area meetings pastors are sponsoring; and, the attention given to the rural church and rural missions on circuit, conference, district and synod programs. This same alertness is manifested by the interest which colleges are taking in the rural church and rural community.

There is need of becoming acquainted with the many agencies in America which are friends of the rural church. These agencies are anxious to have us draw upon their resources in the interest of building a stronger church and a better community. In some areas of the country there is still a feeling of complacency. It will not greatly retard the forward movement initiated by rural pastors who by means of study and exchange of ideas develop themselves so they will be able to give the church their best.

—National Lutheran Council

The Holt Mural at Merom

• The Holt Hall mural at Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana, depicts the central role of rural life in the present and future of Christian democracy in America. It was painted by Thomas C. Steger, an artist whose career was interrupted by the draft in 1940, when he was assigned by order of Selective Service to the Civilian Public Service Camp at Merom, Ind.

The idea of the mural was born during conversations between Mr. Steger and the late Dr. Arthur E. Holt, who was at that time chairman of the Merom Institute Board of Trustees. The cost of materials was paid by Thomas and Florence Potts, directors of the Civilian Public Service Camp.

All of the work was volunteered by the artist. It had to be done during spare time after he had put in an eight to ten hour day with the other men assigned to the Merom Camp. It was only natural that many delays and discouragements were encountered in a situation of this kind, but the mural was completed in good time and dedicated at a dinner in the artist's honor.

The figure of the farmer at work which occupies the dominating position in the center of the picture symbolizes rural life and rural values. The city appears as a dependent child of the country. We also see physical conflict symbolized by one figure from each of the major wars in which our country has engaged.

The mural is appropriately located in North Hall which serves not only as the main dining room for a thousand conference guests each year but also as the popular social center of Merom Institute's Christian rural life program.

Merom Institute and its mural, therefore, call upon rural Americans to face their responsibilities and recognize that it is they who must feed and clothe society and sustain the family virtues, the democratic virtues and the neighborly virtues.

—Shirley E. Greene

Confidential Note

This item is as confidential as most of the stuff that goes under the label.

When *Town and Country Church* was established it was expected that genius would flow forth every week from every hillside or stream or every other county, at least, and the editors would have a hard time deciding what to use.

Actually, we write about ten begging letters for every article we publish.

The editors also write up too much of the material themselves. It is their wish that you who receive the magazine write the material, and the editors only edit.

We thought that if we revealed the situation there might be more voluntary contributions from the parishes themselves.

You're probably under the impression that we have a great deal of material. We don't, and we ask you to send us pieces, long or short—not over 1,200 words, please—telling us what you think is significant. Or just write a letter concerning something on your mind.